



THE

# KNIGHT

May-June 2001



VOLUME 23, No. 5. Issue #126. The LITHUANIAN Numismatic Association. Frank Passic, EDITOR

## LITHUANIAN TOKENS OF GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN

By Frank Passic

Throughout the United States there are numerous cities where Lithuanians settled and established their own organizations as they settled into life in America. Most prominent of course is Chicago, Illinois. Many Lithuanian societies/lodges issued their own "GOOD FOR" tokens for internal use at their establishments. Tokens issued by Lithuanians in Chicago, and also in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania have previously been documented and written about in numismatic publications, including *The Knight*.

There are other communities that also issued Lithuanian tokens. It is always a challenge to find these at numismatic conventions. One such place is the Lithuanian community in the city of Grand Rapids, Michigan, where at least three tokens were issued.

Grand Rapids, Michigan is a prosperous city located on the western side of the lower peninsula. Grand Rapids has historically been known as the "furniture capital" due to its furniture making firms of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Gypsum is also mined in the area.

The first Lithuanians came to Grand Rapids probably in the 1870s (city directories list some Lithuanian-sounding surnames) but most definitely in the 1880s with the arrival of Louis Galinis in 1884. Lithuanians settled in the area of the northwest Grand Rapids flood plain in what would become known as "Old Lithuanian Town." This is generally north of 11th avenue on the south, east of Alpine on the west, west of the Grand River on the east, and the city limits on the north.



First Token  
pre-1921



ABOVE: The brick Sons of Lithuania Aid Society Hall at 1057 Hamilton Avenue NW, dedicated in 1913, and currently used by the Sons and Daughters Club.

The first Lithuanian organization to be formed was the Sts. Peter & Paul Aid Society in 1891, a Catholic organization, followed by the St. George's Aid Society in 1903.

Recently a new highly illustrated book was published entitled, "Growing Up in Old Lithuanian Town," by Edward V. Gillis [Gyls](1920-1999), who diligently researched the history of the Lithuanian community in Grand Rapids for 20 years. The books are available from the Grand Rapids Historical Commission, c/o Grand Rapids Public Library, 111 Library St. N.E., Grand Rapids, MI 49503-3268. (616) 988-5400, eXt. 5495. Books are \$20 each plus \$3.50 p & h. (Continued on page 2...)



# GRAND RAPIDS TOKENS

2. (Continued from page 1....)

The author states, (page 6), "As the continuing influx of immigrants expanded the city's Lithuanian population, the two societies began feeling the need to build fellowship halls. There in their own svteinės, or sitting rooms, as the halls were called, club members could relax, play cards, chat with friends and generally enjoy life. In the bar room that was an integral part of each svetainė, members could have a beer or two and feast on free bar food that featured such tasty treats as salami on rye, pickled herring, pig hocks, cooked fresh sausage and crock pickles." (pg. 6).

In 1903, the Sons of Lithuania Aid Society was formed. It was founded as a fraternal organization "designed to promote Lithuanian culture and to provide mutual aid in case of need." (pg. 12). It had no formal religious connection, and the group became very popular among the Lithuanian community in Grand Rapids. The Sons Hall at 1057 Hamilton Avenue NW was dedicated in 1913. This establishment contained a ballroom and drama hall, stage and dressing rooms, and a dance band. The walls were decorated with paintings of Lithuanian villages and Lithuanian life. Gillis writes, "During the winter, the dancers wore their heavy coats until the pot-bellied stoves finally warmed the space, and in the hard-to-heat bar room, members vied for the card tables nearest the stoves." (pg. 8) The Hall also had its own library.

Another group, the Simano Daukanto Historiko Society was formed in 1911 (named after Simonas Daukantas). It was the only group which admitted women as equal members. The group rented rooms at the Sons of Lithuania Hall. In 1921 it merged with the Sons group, to become the Lithuania Sons and Daughters Aid Society.

"In the early 1970s, the Sons and Daughters of Lithuania Aid Society found itself grappling with spiraling inflation and the unavailability of affordable insurance. Changing its name in 1975 to the Sons and Daughters Club, the organization pinned its hopes for survival on transforming itself from an aid society to a social club," states Gillis (pg. 86.).

Under this historical background, there are at least three known Lithuanian tokens issued by the Sons and Daughters group. These are in the private collection of Edward Bawden, a member of the Michigan Token and Medal Society who has an extensive historical collection of Grand Rapids tokens,



medals, and exnumia. Mr. Bawden graciously lent us his Grand Rapids Lithuanian tokens for examination and photographing. He also supplied them to the aforementioned book publishers, and two of them are pictured on page 16 as a collage of society badges and tokens. The photos are too small however to make out any details. We are happy to clearly picture them here in *The Knight*. Michigan tokens are cataloged for collectors in the standard reference "Michigan Trade Tokens" by Paul Cunningham (1987).

The first token was issued during the World War I period under the group's original pre-1921 name when it was known as the Sons of Lithuania Aid Society. Description: "LITHUANIAN/SONS/G.R.M". [Grand Rapids, Michigan] Aluminum, 24 mm. Obverse dotted border. Reverse: "GOOD FOR [4-petal flourish before & after]/ 5 / CENTS / IN TRADE" Dotted border. Cunningham pg. 324. 370L4A 24-R-A.

The second token, issued after 1921, bears the name of the merged organizations. LITHUANIA SONS/ & /DAUGHTERS/ HALL. Brass, round, 20 mm. Connected beaded border. Reverse: "GOOD FOR/ 5¢/ IN TRADE" Dotted border. Unlisted in Cunningham.

The third token is somewhat smaller. LITHUANIA SONS AND DAUGHTERS HALL. Brass, Octagonal 18 x 20 mm. Obverse, each word new line. Connected beaded border. Reverse: "GOOD FOR/5¢/IN TRADE." Dotted border. Cunningham pg. 324. 370L5a 18-H-B.

Do any of our readers have any Lithuanian tokens from their own community? Please let us know!



# LITHUANIAN NUMISMATIC CHRISTMAS CARD OF DR. ALEKSANDRAS M. RAČKUS

One aspect of Lithuanian numismatics that has not been discussed much is that of postcards and greeting cards illustrating Lithuanian coins and currency. Oftentimes the postcards are “reduced size” photographs of Lithuanian banknotes, coins and/or medals. This writer has seen postcards dating from the 1920s with pictures of, as examples, a 1,000 litų banknote, a Petras Rimša medal, and a mounted frame with all of Lithuania’s 1922 “permanent” banknotes along with a photograph of the bank itself. These occasionally pop up in auctions or on price lists of world post cards, and are interesting “supplements” to a numismatic collection.

In the collection of the Balzekas Musuem of Lithuanian Culture in Chicago are several numismatic-related Christmas greeting cards produced during the 1950s by the noted Lithuanian numismatist, Dr. Aleksandras Račkus (1893-1965). Many of Dr. Račkus’ Lithuanian collections of various sorts (stamps, coins, medals, amber, etc.) were acquired by the Museum, including his various Christmas cards.

In addition to his professional skills and numismatic zeal, Dr. Račkus was also an artist. His original colorful Christmas greeting cards bore a Lithuanian patriotic, religious, and/or numismatic theme. The Balzekas Museum collection of these cards also includes several original art-work plastic-type sheets used by the printer for the silk-screen printing of Račkus’ cards.

Because of the many obstacles to Lithuanian numismatic research through the years of foreign occupation and dominance, the attribution of Lithuania’s early coinage was often erroneous or guesswork. Dr. Račkus, in his zeal to promote Lithuania, often mis-attributed Lithuania’s early coinage. In those times however, who could scholarly refute his assertions? Račkus’ published numerous written articles, commemorative envelopes, and numismatic Christmas cards. They innocently found their way into the unsuspecting numismatic press from time to time, which only perpetuated those errors in their publications. The story about Victor David Brenner being “really”



Viktoras Baranauskas, or Barnauskas is one of Račkus’ assertions that still surfaces even today. Despite his historical inaccuracies, Dr. Račkus’ patriotism, love and zeal for Lithuania was impeccable. This numismatic Christmas card is just one example of the numerous items Račkus produced to promote awareness of Lithuania.

This particular card when folded measures 135 x 105 mm., and is printed on a salmon color “card stock” paper. The background colors are from top to bottom: Yellow (English text), Green (Lithuanian text), Red (left triangle), blue (right area), and white (bottom area).

On top in English and then in Lithuanian immediately below is the the text which states: “Silver coins struck by Olgird, Grand Duke of Lithuania, 1345-1377, with his initial “O.” In large letters at the bottom is written in Lithuanian then English the words “Sveikiname Greetings.” A decorative Lithuanian cross pattern design appears on the right. A large vertical overprint in green, “PAX” which is Latin for “Peace” appears in the center. (Continued on page 4...)



# RAČKUS CARD (Continued from page 3....)

4. Illustrated throughout the card are ten two-denar (dvidenaris) coins, with an enlarged "Columns of Gediminas" side depicted in the center. Some are shown with a small supposed letter "L" near the top in various positions. Račkus asserted that the figure in the center of the Gediminas emblem was the supposed letter "O" which stood for "Olgird," or "Algirdas." On a couple of the coins Račkus liberally curves the bottom numerals "II" to form the letter "O" as it also appears inside the Columns center.



This of course has been disputed by numismatic scholars. Sajauskas & Kaubrys attribute this coin to Vytautas the Great (1392-1430), and three such coins are illustrated on pg. 51 of their major book (1993). They state they were produced at the Vilnius mint from 1401 to 1430. Author Jonas K. Karys (1959) also attributes them to Vytautas but asserts they were minted at Lutsk (pp. 140-144) because of the supposed letter "L" that appears in various positions on top of the Columns. The two lines below the Columns stand for the numerals II, meaning "two."

The inside of the card bears a religious theme, showing "Miraculous Madonna in Šiluva, Lithuania," within a decorative frame with candles. The bottom text states, "Best Wishes! Dr. & Mrs. A.M. Račkus." Dr.

Račkus was married to Katrina Ambrozaitė (1898-1964), but their relationship became strained (partly due to her years of chain smoking which resulted in her untimely death by mouth cancer in 1964) and the two did not live with each other in their later years.

In addition, the card's religious theme was in keeping with Lithuanian heritage and tradition, rather than by any religious convictions of Dr. Račkus, who was an avowed atheist.

## Authors

Justinas and Stasys

Sajauskas wrote an article featuring other numismatic Christmas cards of Dr. Račkus in the 1998 issue #5 of *Kolekcija*. We'll try featuring it this fall here in *The Knight* in time for Christmas.

THE KNIGHT, Volume 23, No. 5, Issue #126. May-June 2001. The official publication of the Lithuanian Numismatic Association. Aleksandras Radžius, Baltimore, MD, DIRECTOR. Frank Passic, Albion, MI, EDITOR.

Subscription/Membership to Volume 23 (5 issues): a donation of \$15 or more. Write: Lithuanian Numismatic Association, P.O. Box 22696, Baltimore, MD 21203.

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Kathryn Račkus

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# 1921 RUSNĖ MUNICIPAL NOTES UPDATE

5.

By Aleksandras Kubilas, Vilnius, Lithuania

Translated by Alex Radžius

In my article published in *The Knight* Volume 20, No. 5 (#111) May-June 1998, pp. 8-9; and in *Kolekcija* Nr. 4, 1997, pp. 60-61, my chart concerning the Rusnė municipal 50 pfennig notes dated July 1, 1920 only showed three different known types. These focused on the pre-printed prefix "No. 00," or "No. 0," or "No. 1" before the remaining serial number counter printer was used.

In the year 2000 this author was able to find two additional Rusnė banknote varieties that were previously unknown, at least in Lithuania. Thus, in place of the old Table 2, there should be an updated Table 2-A. The designations of the notes in the old Table no longer match the designations of the notes in the new Table.

The newly discovered notes in Table 2-A are designated 2b and 2d. Neither of these notes are in Dr. Arnold Keller's catalog.



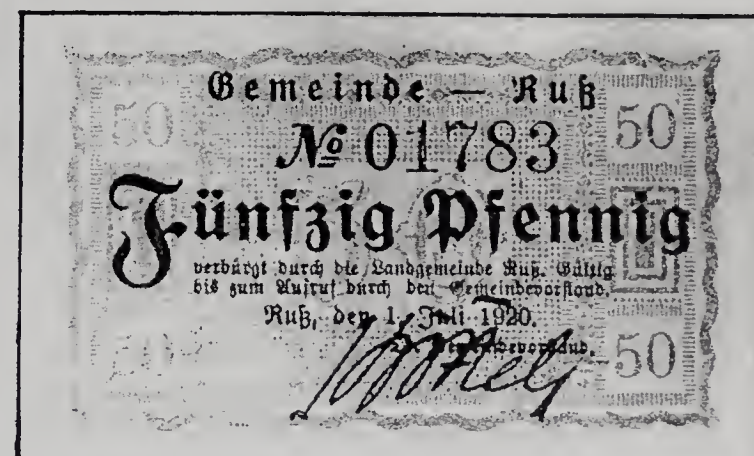
2a. No. 00- no signature; seal on back.



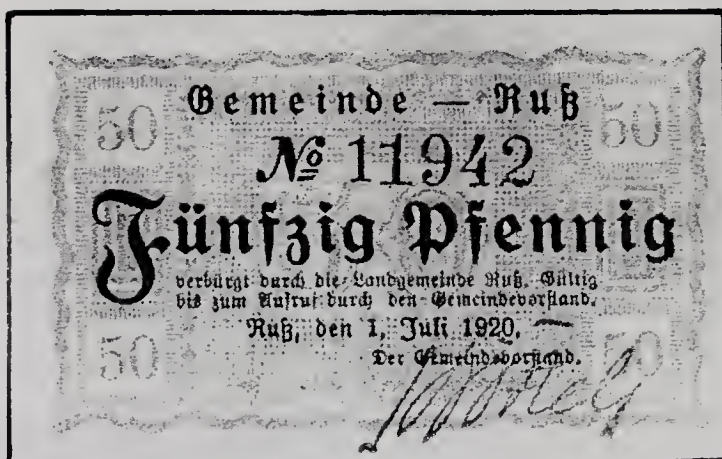
2b. No. 0- no signature; seal on back.



RIGHT: 2d  
(NEW) No.  
10-with signat;  
no seal on  
back.



2c. No. 0- with signat; no seal on back.



LEFT: 2e. No  
1-with signat;  
no seal on  
back.

TABLE 2-A. RUSNĖ NOTES of the SECOND ISSUE

NOTE Catalog Number	STAMPED WITH:					Seal on back	Signa- ture on Face	Presumed order of issuance	Presumed number issued	Rarity
	Nr.00	Nr. 0	Nr. 0	Nr.10	Nr. 1					
2a	+					+		I	999	RR
2b		+				+		I	65 (783)*	RRRR
2c			+				+	II	9.999	
2d				+			+	III	1000	RR (RRRR)
2e					+		+	IV	19.999	

\*for 2-b below:  
Based on the notes owned by the author, there are only 65 known 2-b type notes, but there could be no more than 783. This number could be adjusted if 2-b type notes are discovered with higher serial numbers and 2-c type notes with smaller numbers (2-b = 1064, 2c = 01783).



# LITHUANIAN 6. NUMISMATIC DICTIONARY

By  
Jonas K. Karys 55.



English translation by  
V.L.G. Matelis

Continued from last issue....

imitated in 1521 by Brandenburg. And the word "taler" seemed ordained for this coin when about that same time (1518-19), the Baron von Schlick issued a silver coin, struck at Joachimsthal in Bohemia, having about 27 gr. net, and called from its place of origin (and its design of St. Joachim) the "Joachimsthaler." Later, that name was shortened to the German to "Thaler," and eventually to "Taler." Various nations adjusted that name, daler, tallero, taleri, dollar, taleris. For about 400 years, the taler remained the basic coin in Europe. With that name, and occasionally with others (peso, krona, peastre), the silver coins of the so-called Taler denomination were struck in a great many lands and states, including here in the 16th century, the Vilnius "half-kapos" of the Grand Duchy. But because of the eroding value and the fluctuation of the smaller subsidiary coins, the taler did not retain its par value. In some places it was compared with its subsidiary coins one way, in



Taleriai: 1, Grafo von Schlick (apie 1524) Joachimstaleris: 2, LDK-tystė 1564 (puskapis); 3, Prūsijos Reichstaleris (1750).

others, differently. For example, in 1551 the German taler equalled 72 kreizers. After 15 years, it was reduced to 66, while the "Guldenhaler" rated at 60. In Austria and south Germanys states, the taler was reduced to kreizers. In north Germany, into groshes. There were talers here valued at 20, 21, 24, 25, 30, 32, 36, and 48 groshes. To lessen this disorder, the Germans developed the so-called "Speciesthaler," 0.1 marks weight, 23.4 gr. of silver, and the Reichstaler, equalling 90 kreizers. With the introduction into the German Empire the standard mark, the taler was given the legal value of 3 marks.

2. The Jesus taler, a silver coin of the Saxon-Hesse League, struck in 1538, 1545-46, with the figure of Christ rising from the grave on the reverse. 3. Talismanian Talers, struck by Duke David von Mansfeld, with the inscription "Bei Got ist Rath un That," with the design of St. George. 4. Maria Theresa's talers, in the 18th century, with high purity of about 28 gr., bearing Maria Theresa's portrait. This was probably the most popular trade coin in the Levant and around the Red Sea. In Ethiopia and Yemen, it became so popular that it was considered their own. This taler was struck originally in 1753 and in places it is struck up to the present. Some of the latest issues came from London, Brussels, Bombay, and Vienna. After the death of Maria Theresa, all subsequent issues of this taler bear the date of her death, 1780.

5. A silver coin valued at 30 groshes, struck by Sigismund August for the Grand Duchy of Lithuania, and issued from Vilnius, one type in 1564, and the second in 1565. The original weight of these coins was 27.869 gr., with silver purity of about 0.735. In Lithuania, it was termed a "half kapa," since it contained a half kapa (or 30 groshes). That is also noted in the inscribed legend "XXX" or "30" on the obverse side of both coins. The talers/half kapos of Sigismund August mentioned here were the first such large and beautiful coins circulated not only in Lithuania, but in the entire joint Polish-Lithuanian state. Since Poland had no similar coins, then comparing our taler with their own "zloty" composed of 30 groshes, they began calling it a "zlotowska."





Taleris II: 1, Šv. Romos Imper. "3 imperatorių" taleris (1590); 2, švedų Karalienės Kristinos dvigubas t. (1646); 3, Marijos-Teresijos (dar tebecinantis taleris).

With the Lithuanian and Polish coins mingling with one another, and after the Union of Lublin step by step coming together into one system, the Cracow "zlotas" became the basic monetary unit for both countries. Then the Lithuanian taler/halfkapa became a "zloty." Finally, the term "zloty" was translated into a sorry Lithuanian rendering of "auksinas," which was applied to the Lithuania 30-grašiai coin. However, foreigners and merchants, being acquainted with the earlier circulating talers in international trade, quickly began to accept Sigismund August's halfkapa as talers, since by their weight, metallic composition and appearance the halfkapa clearly resembled all other countries talers. Further, again because of its resemblance, the Lithuanian halfkapa was even called a gulden occasionally, though this term did not stick. To a Lithuanian, and any other foreigner other than Poles, the largest silver coins of Sigismund August are even today accepted as talers or halfkaps.

Similar coins were struck at Vilnius by Stephen Bathory, but they never became popular, since they were issued more resembling medals, lacking the denomination, were of incorrect weight (1580), while a coin of correct weight (1585) circulated at 35 grašiai. Therefore, it lost its category of a halfkapa. Even greater uncertainty was created for Batory's talers, by his gold medals, struck by the dies of his silver talers. There are also a number of counterfeit talers of Lithuania. They were produced for purposes of gain, by the infamous 19th century forger, J. Mainert, a medalist of Warsaw's Coin Mint, who falsified and altered other historical coins. In addition to the circulating talers of the Grand Duchy, even at this distance, we must join the foreign (Spanish, Emperor Charles V) silver talers, received in 1564 from Spain. They were sent in repayment of a loan, made by Sigismund August's mother, Bona, to Phillip II. These talers, whose accurate number is unknown, were shipped to Vilnius and there were counterstamped (with a die over the entire circle) Sigismund August's initials in Latin--SA, appear above his crown, and crosswise, the date 1564. By a directive of June 16, it was placed into circulation. The quotation (par value) for countermarked talers, which had to be observed in circulation in Lithuania and Poland, was arbitrarily set at 60 Polish groshes, though their actual value was quite a bit lower. The taler weighed on an average of 29.5 gr., (but in one there was only 25.7650 gr.) so in reality it rated only about 33.5 of the current groshes. Sigismund August had promised them at the same price as they were issued and repurchased, but that such an operation had truly occurred, we have no knowledge.

TAMGA/Tamgo. Turkish, Mongolian, Tatar. A specific symbol, a totem, a die, seal, sort of coat-of-arms. They were of all kinds: birds, trees, fish, animals (or their parts), various geometrical figures, etc. A tamga could be given to anyone whom the ruler chose. As an example, the famous Ghengis Khan (1167-1227) had gifted various tamgas to an entire succession of his distinguished battle chiefs and other barons. In kindred communities, the tamga symbol signified the property of the entire community, or what was produced or owned by any of the community's members. A tamga attached to a horse would signify to whom the horse belonged, or to other animals, weapons, tools, pennants, who rested under the headstone covered by that tamga, or who paid a required tax for certain merchandize.

The tamga was particularly popular on coins. Here is guaranteed that a coin marked with a certain tamga was authentic, trustworthy, good. On coins, the tamga first appeared in the 11th century in Asia. Afterwards, it was plentifully  
(Continued next issue...)



# NEW 50 LITŲ COIN ISSUED

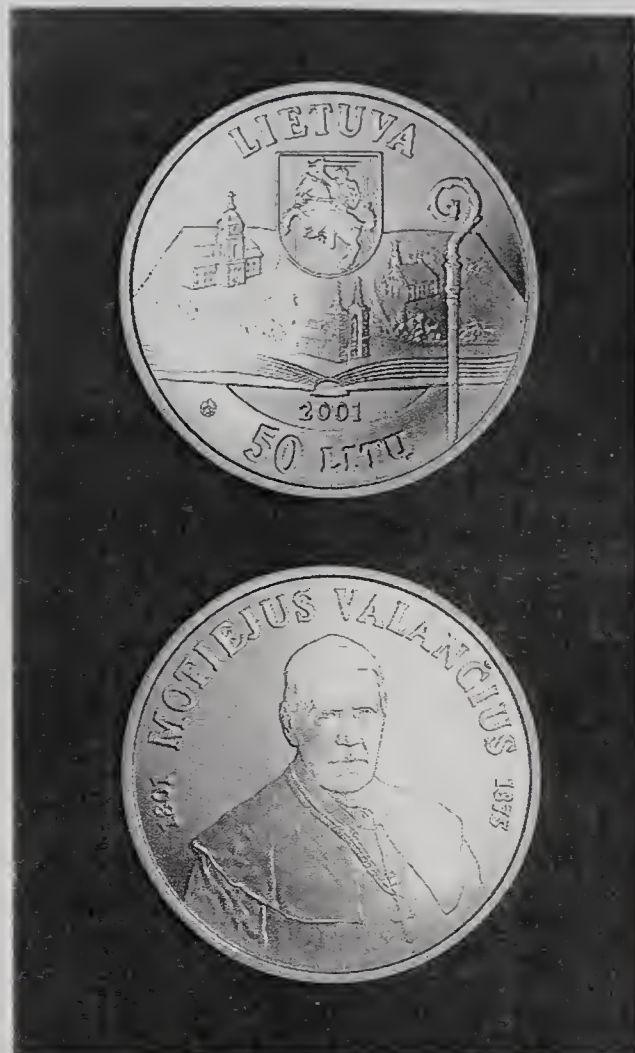
The Bank of Lithuania issued a .925 silver proof 50 litų coin on February 28, 2001. The coin commemorates the 200th anniversary of the birth of Lithuanian Bishop Motiejus Valančius (1801-1875). The coin is 38.61 mm. in diameter and weighs 28.28 gr. It was minted at the Lithuanian Mint in Vilnius, and 2,000 pieces were produced. The coin was designed by sculptor Rimantas Eidėjus.

The obverse features the legend "LIETUVA 50 LITŲ 2001," with the national emblem Vytis in the upper center. The pages of an opened book in the center present the components of the Samogitian diocese in Varniai: the school on the left, the "new" Varniai church in the center, and the "old" Varniai church on the right. On the right is a stylized shepherd's staff.

The reverse features an effigy of Motiejus Valančius facing forward with the legend reading, "1801 MOEIEJUS VALANČIUS 1875."

The edge of the coin is inscribed with the inscription, "LIETUVIŠKAS ŽODIS RAŠTAS IR TIKĖJIMAS--TAUTOS GYVASTIS," which translates: "The Lithuanian Word, Writing and Faith are the Vitality of the Nation."

The issue price of the coin was 90 litai at the Bank of Lithuania. Reproduced here is the biographical brochure written by Professor Vytautas Merkys promoting the coin.



## Bishop Motiejus Valančius (1801–1875)

February 28, 2001 marks the 200<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Motiejus Valančius, one of the most renowned Lithuanian Catholic pastors of that time, the unmatched organiser of the sobriety movement, public educator, the initiator of Lithuanian belles-lettres, and the fosterer of the modern Lithuanian nation.

Valančius was born in Nasrėnai village of Plateliai estate that belonged to Count Martin de Choiseul-Gouffier, in a family

of Lithuanian peasants. His parents,

wishing to send their son to study, provided him with a

certificate of birth in the name of

nobleman Volončevsky. On graduation from Kalvarija

secondary school he studied in the

Samogitian Diocese Seminary and Vilnius

Chief Seminary. Ordained a priest, he

taught Scripture in Mozyr (Belarus)

district school and Kražiai gymnasium,

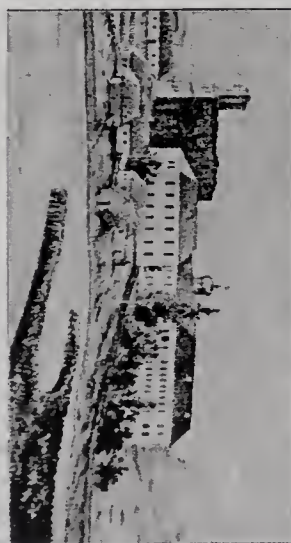
worked as an adjunet in Vilnius

and Petersburg

theological academies. In 1845, he was



Motiejus Valančius  
(J. Tatkai-Hryniewicz, *Ż. przelżytych dni*  
(1850–1908), Warszawa, 1930)



Ruins of Kražiai Jesuit Church and gymnasium  
(I. Butczyński, Kirože, Wilno, 1872)



Valančius with senior clergymen in Kaunas. (On his right: poet Antanas Baranauškas (A. Strauss and S. Sourvitch's studio. From the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences Library collections)

appointed Rector of the Samogitian Diocese Seminary in Varniai. Ordained the Bishop of Samogitians in 1850, he first resided in Varniai but in 1864, by the order of the Russian administration, was moved to Kaunas along with the entire Episcopop College, consistory and seminary for the reasons of better police supervision. He lived there without the right of leaving the city;

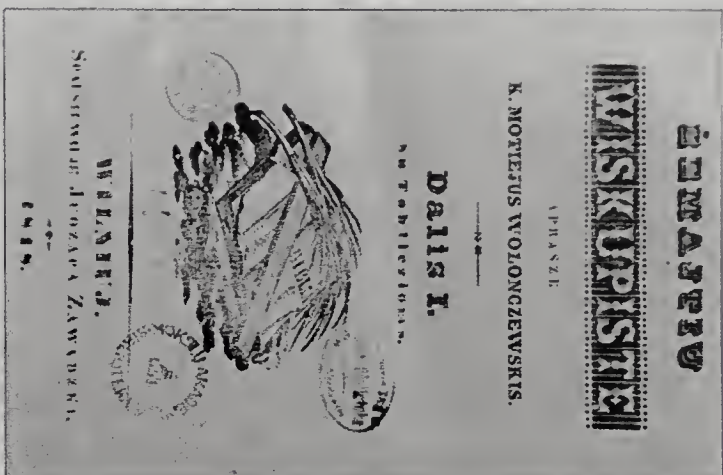
there were even plans to exile Valančius from Lithuania.

Valančius paid a lot of attention to the training of priests and their education; he required them to be diligent and morally strong. At the same time the bishop took care of the nation's moral, religious and cultural education. Throughout his career as a bishop Valančius confirmed 752.4 thousand Catholics to become the widest-known man in Lithuania. In 1858 through 1864 he



organised a mass sobriety movement to comprise 84 per cent of all Catholics of the Samogitian Diocese. The movement spread as far as Vilnius and Minsk dioceses. To propagate sobriety, Valančius would issue pastoral letters, in which he explained that on relinquishing strong alcoholic drinks, the peoples' morality and material position would improve and "our forgotten homeland" would regain its fame.

Title-page of the "Samogitian Diocese" by Valančius (1848)



Valančius worked on developing a consistent system of public education, an important part of which was comprised of catholic parish schools where children were taught the basics of writing and faith in their mother-tongue. The number of pupils in primary schools under his guidance that operated until 1863 made up 6,3 thousand, i.e. 3 times as many as in similar public schools. He tried to establish a secondary school with teaching in Lithuanian. He taught simple people to preserve national traditions, customs, folklore, to perceive the harmony of man and nature, to take care of



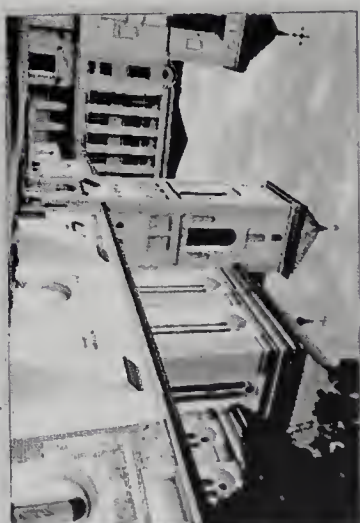
Monument to sobriety in Skapiškis (1862, recreated in 1990)

environmental protection.

Valančius left a number of writings, the majority of which he managed to publish himself. His great merit was that, for religious education, he made use of Lithuanian books; he wrote them himself and urged others to write. By 1864 he had issued 36 religious publications, the most famous of which are hagiographic compositions and hymn books. Valančius was concerned about publishing attractive readings and more beautiful hymns. A very significant work of Valančius of that period was the "Samogitian Diocese" - one of the first scholarly works issued in the Lithuanian language (1848). It was dedicated not to

simple people but rather to the educated social layers, such as students of theological seminaries, priests and noblemen. The use of the scorned folk language as the language of scholarship and prestige was an extraordinarily significant factor in stirring up national revival.

As the Russian government banned Lithuanian press in 1864, Valančius was



Former Theological Seminary of the Samogitian Diocese in Kaunas (now - Kaunas Interdiocese Theological Seminary)

concerned with retaining the readers of traditional Lithuanian press in the Latin alphabet. Therefore, apart from abundant religious writings, he published his fiction and religious-political brochures. 37 books (under 24 titles) were published in this period, including the works of didactic prose: "Children's Book", "The Juvenile Book", "Juzė of Palanga", and "The story of Antanas the Farmhand". The latter story was published after the author's death.



The monument to Motiejus Valančius in Varniai (1998). Sculptor A. Aleksandravičius

simple people but rather to the educated social layers, such as students of theological seminaries, priests and noblemen. The use of the scorned folk language as the language of scholarship and prestige was an extraordinarily significant factor in stirring up national revival.

As the Russian government banned Lithuanian press in 1864, Valančius was

secret schools. After the ban on the Lithuanian press, Valančius established an organisation of book carriers and press supporters, took care of the publication of Lithuanian books in Prussia and their distribution in Lithuania.

The peculiarity of Valančius phenomenon was his understanding of the harmony of Lithuanianism and Catholicism and its historic efficiency. A similar way of action was not unique among the rousers of modern Central and East European nations at the initial stage of national movements. There was no other clergyman and cultural worker in Lithuania as popular as Valančius either before or long after him.

*Professor Vytautas Merkys*





# LETTERS

I found out about the Henry V. Karolkiewicz collection Triton IV Auction on December 6, 2000. I would be very much obliged if you could send me the catalog of this auction and the final price list of the sold coins. If you have participated in this auction it would be very nice if you could write extensively about your impressions of the sale. I am especially interested in the fate of the Lithuanian coins which have excited the imagination of many a numismatist.

In Lithuania because of the 50 years of occupation of the Bolsheviks, saving items of value from the past was not encouraged. But from the nature of Bolshevism, being a cruel and teacherous destroyer, and criminal, ruined collections and the collectors.

Therefore our museums and numismatists are not rich, especially this can be said of the collectors of gold coins. During the Soviet times it was prohibited to even collect gold coins. Thus today even the National Museum of Lithuania does not possess a single gold coin of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. As it is known, coins of this period are very rare and very expensive.

Lithuanian politicians and people in the financial life still did not mature to the level where the importance of relics of the past were understood and a strategy for Lithuanian Museums were formed. On the other hand our economic situation is becoming dangerous and, what is most important, there is no light at the end of the tunnel. I spoke to the people of the Numismatic Cabinet of the National Museum. They tried to find sponsors to help the Museum to acquire the coins they lack at the above mentioned auction. Collectors are despondent because among us there is the same numbness as in the economy. Also, the government's past and present do not take action to give a green light to the Lithuanian numismatists to participate in foreign auctions. --Zenonas Pažarauskas, P. O. Box 530, Vilnius 2024, Lithuania.

Thank you for your newsletter, *The Knight*. The Museum has been collecting your newsletter for a number of years by various ways. Many issues were donated by Eugenijus Ivanauskas of Kaunas. A few were obtained from Zenonas Dukša of Vilnius. Also some were copied from the issue sent to the Bank of Lithuania. We found *The Knight* very interesting.

As for the publication "Numismatics," it is not a newsletter, but a collection of articles which the Museum plans to publish each year as a yearbook. We are preparing the next issue and plan to release it at the end of the year. --Dalia Grimalauskaitė, Director of the Numismatic Section, Lithuanian National Museum [Note: see next letter]

We received your inquiry about the publications issued by our Museum. You can get information about the Museum publications at the internet address: [www.lnm.lt](http://www.lnm.lt) We suggest you become familiar with the publications offered, and perhaps you'll find other publications on numismatics that would interest you.

The Museum publication "Numismatics, Yearbook No. 1" is a collection of articles and we hope, that the publication will be a continuing undertaking of the Museum. The cost will be 15 litai (U.S. \$4) and the shipping fee is 28 litai (U.S. \$7) for a total of 43 Lt (U.S. \$11). If you wish to obtain this publication, have this sum transferred to the Museum's Bank account: Company code: 9075684, AB "Vilniaus Bankas," Code of the New Town Appiliate 260101730, Balance account 120360, Hard currency account number 670711025. Once we receive confirmation from the bank that you have transferred the funds, we will forward the publication to you.

With respect, Kristina Paulauskaitė, Director of the Library, Lietuvos Nacionalinis Muziejus, Arsenalo 1, Vilnius 2001, Lithuania.

[Editor's note: You can also have the post office send a U.S. international money order (fee: \$8) to them which they convert to litai. If you send a check there is a % check fee that must be added]

## WANT/FOR SALE ADS

WANTED: 1997 gold 1 litas (KM-109) commemorative coin. Peter Shulin, 645 Hayes Avenue, Washington, PA 15301.

FOR SALE: Lithuania 2000 Millennium collector coin proof set (10, 20, 50 centų, 1, 2, 5 litai) in "amber"-illustrated holder. \$25 & \$3.50 p & h. Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture gift shop, 6500 S. Pulaski Road, Chicago, IL 60629. (773) 582-6500. [giftshop@lithuanian-museum.org](mailto:giftshop@lithuanian-museum.org)

FOR SALE: 454-page standard reference by Stasys Sajauskas and Domininkas Kaubrys on Lithuanian medieval coinage of the Grand Duchy (1993) \$50. New market price list "trends" (2000) booklet of medieval Lithuanian coins by above. 73 pages. \$15. Also: Lithuanian coins, banknotes, numismatic reference books, etc. Let me E-mail you my price list. Frank Passic, 900 S. Eaton St., Albion, MI 49224. [albionfp@hotmail.com](mailto:albionfp@hotmail.com).